









Amanda Caroline Young Vail  
A Cabinet Card from H.H. Broderick, Walla Walla

Reflections

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July 26 2025

Amanda Caroline Young Vail was my grandfather Tim Dear's grandmother, and she lived for a time in Washougal.

I've been doing extensive family research—deep-diving, really—and recently discovered that Amanda's parents were almost certainly members of the Lost Wagon Train of 1853. (There were other family members on that trip too.) However, Amanda herself is not listed on that journey. She would have been about 16 or 17 years old at the time, so it's possible she traveled with them and was simply left off the record—or that she came separately.

Just today, I came across her obituary, which states that she traveled by horseback from Missouri in 1852—a full year before her parents' documented journey. This raises the intriguing possibility that Amanda may have crossed the plains on her own, or more likely in a small, unrecorded party. I've searched the 1852 records and haven't found her yet, but I plan to keep looking. Or, the info could be incorrect.

Years ago, when my grandmother Blanche passed away and we were clearing out the house, I rescued a shoebox directly out of the dumpster full of letters between Tim and Gramma—written before their move to Camas. In those letters, they describe the care of Amanda C. Vail and her daughter (Tim's mother), who sadly passed away before Amanda, likely due to dementia. Some of the letters contain difficult reflections on that time, especially regarding the care provided by Aunt Mary—Mary Dear Beauchamp, Tim's sister—who graduated from Washougal High School in 1925. It's amazing how these threads continue to surface and connect.

This photo was taken in Walla Walla, Washington Territory, before Washington became a state in 1889. We're linked to the Baker family up there too, which would explain the trip. The studio imprint on the back of the card identifies the photographer as H.H. Broderick, who operated a portrait studio in Walla Walla during that territorial time frame. The deeper I dig, the more I find—not just names and dates, but stories that continue to ripple in ways that are frankly kind of hard for me to comprehend. This is just one strand.







Q. C. Vail No 2  
f. H. on P. H. M.







Amanda Caroline Young Vail



Amanda Caroline Young Vail was born in August 1836 in Missouri to William D. Young and Elizabeth Davis. She married Charles William Vail on August 6, 1857, in Douglas County, Oregon. Together they had three children: Mary E. Vail (1858–1870), Fannie Amanda Vail (1863–1929), and Charles William Vail (1869–1943).

Widowed in 1873, Amanda remained in Oakland, Oregon, where she managed the household. She was photographed around 1886–1887 in Walla Walla, Washington Territory, by H.H. Broderick.

Later in life, she lived in Washougal, Washington, from approximately 1925 to 1930. She died on June 10, 1931, in Portland, Oregon, at the age of 94.